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RECREATION MANAGEMENT REVIEW:

San Carlos Ranger District

San Isabel National Forest

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Program Manager Recreation
Lands and Minerals

February, 1980

MANAGEMENT REVIEW REPORT

1. Introduction

- a. Type of Review:
Recreation Program Review
- b. Unit:
San Carlos Ranger District
San Isabel National Forest
- c. Review Team:
Marvin Vander Kolk, Program Manager Recreation Lands
and Minerals, and Team Leader.
Joe Beck, Forest Engineer.
Rod Lewis, Recreation Staff.
Cindy Kivera, Outdoor Recreation Planner.
Larry Gash, Forester, South Platte Ranger District.
- d. Inclusive dates at unit:
August 21-24, 1979.
- e. Elapsed time since last review of similar type and names of team members:

No evidence was found to indicate that a review of this nature had ever been performed.
- f. Brief description of how the review was conducted, principal participants at unit, and major locations visited.

Announcement of the review was made by memorandum on August 1, 1979, (see Appendix A). The review was begun with initial discussions between Ranger Lockhart and the team on the morning of August 21. The team was accompanied throughout the review by Assistant Ranger, David Walker, Forester, in charge of the District's Recreation Programs. Except for an in-route review of recreation activities and sites along the Oak Creek Grade Road, the review concentrated on recreation activities and sites along the Sangre de Cristo Range portion of the Wet Mountain Valley. The areas visited extended from Lake Creek on the north to Medano Pass on the south. A close out meeting with Ranger Lockhart was held on the morning of August 24, 1979.

2. Summary of Review

- a. Objectives of the review.

The objectives of the review are listed below and on page 2 of the Proposed Management Review Plan (Appendix A). Although it was not specifically stated in the plan, the review was also intended to be a self critique of Forest Recreation Program direction.

b. Findings relating to objectives.

Objective 1. Determine if off road vehicle (ORV) use is being adequately administered.

Finding (a): Within the past year travel restriction posting has improved considerably. However, the travel restriction maps that are being distributed to the public are inadequate and inconsistent and do not provide proper public notice. This problem is discussed in detail in Part 4, Item 1 of this report. (pg. 4)

Finding (b): During the past two summer seasons the District has had dispersed recreation guards working throughout the Sangres. One of their functions was to obtain public compliance with travel restrictions. It appears that they were effective within the limitations imposed by workload, yet to be completed posting, and the confusion being generated by the travel restriction maps.

Finding (c): Situations exist where approved ORV travel and other recreation activities are occurring in conflict. This problem is discussed in detail in Part 4, Item 2 of this report. (pg. 6)

Finding (d): ORV use was not observed to be causing widespread or significant damage to soil, vegetation, water quality, wildlife or aesthetics. Some minor soil and aesthetic damage caused by trailbikes was observed at Oak Creek Campground and adjacent to the dispersed camping area at the foot of Music Pass. The damage resulted from "hill climbing" off designated roads and trails.

Finding (e): National Forest ORV use does not appear to be causing problems for adjacent landowners. The unmaintained condition of Forest Development Roads leading into the Forest is causing problems for adjacent landowners. This situation is described in Part 4, Item 3 of this report. (pg. 8)

Finding (f): ORV use in the Sangres is not being systematically monitored for the purpose of assessing impacts and amount of use.

Objective 2. Determine if public use at dispersed camping areas, parking areas, lakes and riparian areas is resulting in any significant resource deterioration.

Finding: Generally speaking, dispersed use is not exceeding ecological carrying capacity. Soil erosion is occurring at some dispersed campsites and trailheads because of improperly located access routes and unsuitable parking sites. The problems at most of these locations could be remedied without much expense by relocating spurs and placing rock barriers at critical points. At other locations graded parking areas should be provided.

The overnighting of horses at the dispersed camping area at the foot of Music Pass is resulting in the concentration of debris, damage to trees and the construction of makeshift corrals. It is also occurring in close association with general camping and may involve outfitting without a permit.

The time and the situation seem right for instituting a "Pack it in - Pack it out" solid waste collection program for the Sangres. FSM Interim Directive No. 14, 2331.12b., provides direction on the concept. A copy is included in Appendix B.

Objective 3. Determine if the low-standard system roads (which are the principal means of access into the Sangres) are being maintained commensurate with use.

Finding: Most of the roads have not been maintained for many years. The consequences are explained in detail in Part 4, Item 3. (pg. 8)

Objective 4. Determine if developed recreation sites, facilities and improvements such as system trails are being maintained at acceptable levels, and if any developed sites are in need of rehabilitation.

Finding: The District has, through the YACC program, made attractive and beneficial improvements at several campgrounds and trailheads. Structures and facilities at Alvarado and Oak Creek Campgrounds appear to be in a state of good repair and appearance. Some fundamental problems exist with respect to the layout and use of Alvarado Campground and the condition of Lake Creek Campground. These are discussed in detail in Part 4, Item 4 (Alvarado), and 5 (Lake Creek).

Objective 5. Determine if any present recreational uses are diminishing the characteristics of the proposed Sangre de Cristo Wilderness.

Finding: No direct evidence of degrading activity was found. The Comanche-Venable Trail was believed to be a potential problem area, however, time did not permit first hand inspection. Assistant Ranger Walker, had recently traveled that trail and reported that trailbike use was not causing any significant damage to the physical environment. Unauthorized four-wheel drive travel is occurring on a primitive road leading north from Medano Pass, and it may extend into the proposed wilderness. It also appears that similar unauthorized travel is occurring on a primitive road leading southwesterly from the upper trailhead near Music Pass.

Objective 6. Determine if administrative needs of the area are appropriately addressed by the Districts RIM data, annual work plans and Program Budget Documents.

Comment: This objective was not pursued because time was not available.

Other Findings: The review team observed uranium exploration activity on mining claims just inside the National Forest boundary near Westcliffe. The occasion was an opportunity to observe how mining activity and recreation were being integrated and coordinated. The main problem confronting the District was the matter of how to maintain an aesthetically pleasing corridor for the Rainbow Trail and also provide reasonable access for the claimant. The situation was complicated because some adjacent private landowners refused to allow the claimants to gain access by the most direct route and strongly objected to the exploration. The District chose to allow the claimants to use a portion of the Rainbow Trail for vehicle access in lieu of requiring them to construct a new parallel road. (This required some additional clearing of the trail although it was previously close to road width.) The District's administration of the situation appeared appropriate in all respects. If clean-up and rehabilitation are accomplished in accordance with the operations plan, the final results should prove to be the best that anyone could have hoped to achieve under the circumstances.

3. Commendations.

Approximately two and one half years ago and prior to Ranger Lockhart's, and Assistant Ranger Walker's assignments to the San Carlos District, the recreation program could be characterized as declining. Present District administration has reversed that trend and is making marked progress. New trailhead improvements have been developed. Off-road vehicle restrictions are being effectively posted. New signs are being installed. Roads that have not received maintenance for years and perhaps decades are being improved through cooperation with Custer County. Emphasis is being placed on maintaining and constructing trails and administering dispersed recreation use. Ideas and plans are being formulated. In short, very noticeable improvement is evident.

The District's efforts are extending progressively southward. Sizeable areas remain to be affected. Given a reasonable level of resources and continuity in personnel, and if interest remains constant, the total District recreation program should be in good order in another two years.

4. Statement of Findings and Analysis of Alternatives.

Item 1. The maps that are currently being used to place the public on notice of off-road travel regulations are inadequate and inconsistent. The Forest does not have a uniform approach to posting closure notices at road and trail access points.

Condition: The official black and white Forest travel maps dated June 24, 1977, are very difficult to interpret. An unofficial travel map that is only applicable to the Sangre de Cristo Range is also being distributed to the public by the Supervisor's Office. This map purports

to show "Cross Country, Off-Road or Off-Trail Vehicle Travel Prohibited in the San Isabel National Forest portion of the Sangre de Cristos." It is about 25% at variance with the official map. However, an addendum has been stapled to one corner of the map in an attempt to provide an update of the situation. The special map also purports to show the travel regulations in effect on the Rio Grande National Forest portion of the Sangres. The map was developed in 1967 and is still being used by the Supervisor's Office receptionist to respond to the great number of requests for information on hiking and off highway vehicle opportunities in the Sangres.

Within the past year the San Carlos District has developed its own standard for posting closure notices. The standard consists of a color coded portion of the Forest Recreation map and a poster containing applicable prohibitions and regulations. The South Platte District is using signs with symbolic messages. Other Districts appear to be still relying on the arrow marker system, boiler plate signs, or a combination of both.

Cause: Off-road vehicle management is still in infancy. The Forest Service as a whole, has been slow to respond to the impact of this type of use. Washington Office direction is spotty. Regional direction is outdated. The Forest has not taken any recent initiative to provide direction of coordination.

Effect: The lack of consistency produces confusion and contempt among those subject to the travel regulations and confusion and frustration among those who are responsible for enforcement or advising the public of travel conditions.

Alternatives and Recommendations:

1. New and improved official Forest travel maps are due to be printed and available for distribution by January 1, 1980. All unofficial maps should be destroyed.
2. Forest Recreation, Engineering and Law Enforcement staff need to explore posting options with the Regional Office and in consultation with the District Rangers develop a proposed Forest standard for posting closure notices. This should be done by March 1, 1980.
3. The appropriateness of the regulations shown on the new travel maps should be carefully reviewed in conjunction with land management planning. Indications are that corrections will be needed and that coordination between Districts and adjacent Forest will be needed.
4. An excellent system for providing the public with current and accurate information about trails, four-wheel drive roads, and other recreation opportunities has recently been developed by Region 1 and adopted for service-wide use. It is called the Recreation Opportunity Guide System. The guide consists of a collection of page describing recreation opportunities which are categorized according to activities and

associated land areas. The pages are bound in a loose leaf ring binder which is kept in office reception areas. The public user can scan through the binder to discover and select activities and areas of interest. Normally, up to 5 pages (Xerox or duplicate) are made available to a user free of charge. A sample page is shown in Appendix C.

Some of the more desirable features of this system are that it can be prepared by the Districts, easily made available to all Forest offices, easily changed to reflect current situations, and can be used as an effective means for distributing use by displaying alternatives to well known and overused areas.

The Forest has, through the efforts of the VIS-Public Information Officer, initiated the system this past summer, however, the Manual for completion and maintenance of the guide has only recently been published and the purpose and value of the system does not appear to be well understood by Forest personnel.

Recreation staff and VIS staff should join in a concerted effort to expose the system to the Districts and S.O. staff and follow through with personal contacts to "sell" this new system. The system should be made fully operational Forest-wide by May 15, 1980.

Item 2. Conflicts between trailbikers and hikers are occurring on the Music Pass and Comanche-Venable Trails.

Condition: Music Pass trail provides short and easy access to a popular and scenic high-mountain valley (Sand Creek) on the Rio Grande National Forest side of the pass. The valley is within the proposed Sangre de Cristo wilderness and the setting is definitely that of a semi-primitive non-motorized area. Predominant use is overnight backpacking and fishing. The trail from the trailhead parking area to the pass is approximately 1½ miles in length and traverses through spruce timber and alpine meadows. This portion of the trail is open yearlong to foot, horse and trailbike travel. Trailbike travel on the Rio Grande National Forest side of the pass is prohibited.

The Comanche and the Venable trails both begin at Alvarado Campground and extend southwesterly on opposite sides of a narrow ridge to the crest of the Sangres. The two trails are interconnected by a short trail along a portion of the crest called the Phantom Terrace. Both trails are open to foot, horse and trailbike use, but the portion along the Phantom Terrace is closed to trailbike use for safety reasons. The area encompassing the trails is within the proposed Sangre de Cristo Wilderness.

Over the course of the past three years, hikers have written to the Forest Supervisor or personally appeared at the Supervisor's Office to report and complain about trailbike use on these trails. Similarly trailbikers have reported that hikers have been verbally abusive, placed hazardous obstacles on the trails and even vandalized personal property.

Cause: Conflict between recreationists arise when the recreational needs of one person or class cannot be expressed because of the activities of another person or class (goal interference). Sand Creek Valley and the area traversed by the Comanche-Venable Trails provide very attractive physical settings for backpacking and viewing outstanding scenery. Consequently, the areas attract people who have felt needs which the setting is capable of satisfying, namely isolation from the sights and sounds of man, independence, closeness to nature, tranquility and self reliance. It is not difficult to understand why the presence of motor vehicles prevent such people from realizing those needs and why they often tend to view trailbikers and snowmobilers through rage-tinted glasses.

The Rainbow Trail traverses through a zone of relatively uniform terrain, vegetation and aspect; and (in comparison to the before-mentioned trails) through a zone of common scenery. Evidences of human activity, land modification and resource utilization are not uncommon and the trail is intersected intermittently by roads. This type of setting is not sought after by hikers and backpackers and they appear to use the trail only for the purpose of reaching other trails that climb to the high country. The Rainbow Trail is essentially a trailbike and horse trail.

Alternatives and Recommendations:

In order to resolve the conflicts, managerial settings must be changed. Action should be taken to separate incompatible activities.

Music Pass Trail. It is recommended that this trail be closed to trailbike use prior to the next season of use. The trail is used principally by hikers and horseback riders and only occasionally by trailbikers. However, when trailbike use does occur it seems to be strongly resented by the other user groups. It is believed that hikers and horsebackers perceive the trail as the portal to the wilderness valley just over the pass and accordingly perceive trailbike use as completely out of character. The short 1½ miles of trail adds little to trailbiking opportunities.

Comanche-Venable Trail. Both branches of this trail appear to provide recreational experience opportunities desired by both hikers and trailbikers. Any proposal to change use patterns in this area would likely be a significant issue and should not be attempted without public involvement. The current land management planning effort is a timely vehicle for evaluating the issues and developing solutions. Moreover, it is a requirement of the land management planning regulations (36 CFR 219.12), to evaluate and classify areas and trails as to whether or not off-road vehicle use should be permitted. Regulation 36 CFR 295.4, requires that the public shall be provided an opportunity to participate in the process prior to any designation or revision of off-road vehicle use (except in cases where immediate corrective action is warranted).

If the affected area is eventually classified as wilderness, trailbike use will be prohibited. However, present trailbike use does not appear to be physically diminishing the area's potential as wilderness. In view of this, and the fact that both trails proceed along separate routes to about the same point, the alternative of closing one trail to trailbike use and leaving the other open should be thoroughly evaluated.

Item 3. Forest Development Roads providing access to the Sangres are, with few exceptions, severely eroded and some portions are hazardous to travel.

Condition: The following principal access roads are eroded to a condition resembling a rock and bolder strewn dry stream bed:

FR #300, from Lake Creek Campground to Balman Reservoir.

FR #301, from the end of recent improvement work done by Custer County in section 36 to the end of the road at Hermit Pass.

FR #313, from the end of County maintenance in section 5, T43N, R72W, to end of road near South Colony Lakes.

The Medano Pass road, FR #406, is severely eroded from about where it enters the San Isabel National Forest on the east and continuing on into the Rio Grande National Forest.

Fallen snags project into the traveled portion of FR #313, and a decadent log bridge across South Colony Creek in section 16 is being used by some vehicles, - others ford the creek.

The principal means of transportation used on these roads is 4-wheel drive vehicles, but use by 2-wheel drive pick-ups and passenger cars is not uncommon.

Average daily traffic on the roads is estimated to be near 15 ADT. A July Saturday afternoon count of vehicles parked at the end or along sample roads was as follows.

FR #301 (Hermit Road) 25
FR #313 (S. Colony Road) 40
FR #329 (Music Pass Road) 23

According to Forest Service policy, all system roads are to be maintained to at least maintenance level 1, which is the minimum work necessary to keep drainage functional and the roadbeds stable. (FSM 7732.11) (FSH 7709.15 12.21). Roads carrying the estimated traffic occurring on these roads are also normally expected to be maintained at a level that will provide safe and moderately convenient travel, suitable for passenger cars.

Cause: The severely eroded condition of these roads is not the result of use or abuse by motor vehicles. Rather, the conditions are the direct result of a long-standing failure of the Forest Service to perform basic custodial road maintenance. Even if the roads were closed to vehicle use today, erosion would progress unless water diversion structures were installed. Comments from a few persons familiar with the area indicate that about 10 to 20 years ago these roads could be traveled by passenger cars without difficulty. This period seems to coincide with the time when the roads were last used for access to mines or for other resource utilization activities. No maintenance appears to have been performed on the roads after cessation of resource utilization activities, nor does it appear that any action was taken at that time to prepare the roads for future intermittent use. A notable exception to the general condition is a portion of FR #329 between the Rainbow Trail and the Music Pass Trailhead. Approximately five or more years ago, large and frequent waterbars were installed along this portion and erosion has been substantially prevented.

In view of the clear policy on road maintenance and our standard professed concern over soil erosion (old multiple use reports, new EAR's etc.) it is difficult to explain how such conditions could have developed within the National Forest.

Clearly, a gap exists between theory and practice. This gap is not unique to the San Carlos District of the Pike and San Isabel National Forest. The team witnessed its existence on the Rio Grande National Forest, and at least one on the team had witnessed the same gap to exist on other Forests, including the Custer National Forest in Region 1 and on two National Forests in Region 9. The name of the problem could be called "The Drift Away from Basics Syndrome."

Consequences: Initial investments in the roads have probably been completely lost. It would probably require as much work to restore the roads to former standards as would be required to build new roads to those same standards. The team did not attempt to quantify or qualify the effect that soil movement from the roads has had on adjacent Forest land and streams. The general damaging effects of such erosion are well documented throughout resource management literature. However, an irrigation ditch adjacent to FR #313 was observed to be filled with soil which probably came from the road.

A professed goal of the Regional and Forest recreation program is to emphasize dispersed recreation use. Through directional road signs, maps and contacts we continue to invite the public to this area of exceptional scenery and opportunity. The invitation surpasses the reception. Those arriving in passenger cars must decide whether travel into the Sangres is within the capability of their vehicle or worth the risk of potential vehicle damage. A sign cautioning against the use of passenger cars, was found on only one road, FR #301. Some drivers commit themselves and obviously later regret it as evidenced by streaks of oil on the roadway. Others park at the end of county road maintenance

and then walk. In some cases they are forced to encroach on private lands for parking space. "No Trespassing" signs along the lower portion of FR #313 indicate that some private land owners object. The parking problem and the land deterioration resulting from our failure to maintain roads could also have an effect on our ability to negotiate rights-of-way. No prudent private landowner would want to see such conditions occur across his property.

The present road conditions have the effect of limiting motor vehicle access to four-wheel drive vehicles and trailbikes. This in turn has the effect of maintaining a semi-primitive Forest setting and the recreation activity opportunities associated with that part of the recreation opportunity spectrum. The maintenance of a semi-primitive setting for most of the Sangres seems highly appropriate but it should happen as a result of deliberate management rather than through default. Maintenance of a semi-primitive low-vehicle use setting can be achieved without entailing the undesirable conditions described above. Present conditions do not even permit interesting or safe four-wheel drive vehicle travel. Traveling long stretches of bolder strewn road is fatiguing and boring. One must devote full attention to driving and hanging on.

Based on personal experience and observations, it is our belief that basic erosion control measures (such as the installation of drainage dips and waterbars and the employment of techniques such as grade changes and outsloping) can be employed in a manner that will both protect the road and resources and enhance off-highway vehicle touring experiences.

Such measure can also be located and designed so as to effectively preclude travel by passenger cars. However, concurrent action should be taken to provide suitable parking areas for passenger cars.

In conclusion, it is also stated that unless the present trend of non-maintenance is reversed, other roads in the Sangres will also be converting by default into off-highway vehicle roads only. These include the roads into the Brush Creek Lake Trailhead, and the Rainbow Trail trailhead on the road to Music Pass.

Alternatives and Recommendations:

The following course of action is recommended:

Obvious road hazards such as windfallen timber and decadent bridges should be removed immediately. Deliberate road maintenance should be resumed. The maintenance of each road should be commensurate with the management objectives of the area it serves. Where the management objective is to limit access to off-highway vehicles (4x4's and trailbikes) maintenance can involve such basic measure as outsloping, and installation of drainage dips, waterbars, log culverts and log bridges. The recommended type of vehicle use should be posted at the beginning of roads maintained to off-road vehicle standards. Roads

providing general access (passenger car and ORV) to existing trail-heads at the base of the Sangres should be graded. Parking areas for passenger cars should be developed for the Hermit Pass and South Colony Lake roads at the first suitable location on public lands.

The District should develop a maintenance schedule for its roads and determine funding needs. The Forest should in turn aggressively support the Districts funding needs and develop the expertise to provide appropriate training in road maintenance techniques and adequate engineering and contracting services.

Item 4. Alvarado recreation area is like an unplanned community. Several not completely compatible activities are competing for the same space. These activities should be separated as much as practicable. In conjunction with the need for taking a fresh look at how the present situation might be improved, it is also timely to consider whether or not the area should be expanded to accommodate greater public use.

Condition: The Alvarado recreation area serves four functions:

First and foremost, it is a very popular campground. It is popular because a vacationer from Texas or a weekender from Pueblo can stay at Alvarado and pursue a variety of related outdoor recreation activities close by. In contrast, Oak Creek Campground (which is much closer to Canon City) is not popular because camping is about the only activity that the area has to offer. As campgrounds per se, one is about equal to the other. The popularity of a campground appears to be closely related to the variety of other recreational activities that can be pursued in the same general area.

Second, Alvarado is a very popular trailhead for similar reasons. It affords opportunities to day hike, overnight hike, ride trailbikes and ride horses. In winter it affords opportunities for snowmobiling and cross country skiing.

Third, Alvarado is the site of Abbots Lodge, an organization camp under permit to the Holy Cross Abby of Canon City.

Fourth, the road into the campground also provides access to a resort on adjacent private lands.

Adding to the complexity of the area is the physical arrangement of things. A small parking area serving a foot and horse trail is located at the main entrance of the campground. A "U.S. Fee Area" sign is posted here. The principal trailhead and parking area for hikers and trailbikers is located immediately beyond and above the campground and can only be reached by driving through all of it. Two trails depart from that trailhead. The Rainbow Trail, which is essentially a horse and trailbike trail, crosses through the area. All the trails are connected

through various loops and routes, creating a pattern that resembles a wiring diagram for an electric circuit. An uneven aged forest of signs, posters and diagrams have been planted to clarify the situation for visitors.

Cause: The situation is probably the result of incremental development occurring without benefit of an overall design concept, or the result of a poor design concept.

Effect: Routing trailhead users and their motor vehicles through the campground is like having a house arranged so that visitors must walk through the bedroom to get to the living room. The campers must contend with the extra noise, dust and traffic generated by the trail system users. On the other hand, some of the trail users are probably confused or intimidated by the "U.S. Fee Area" sign at the only entrance to the area. Getting to know your way around Alvarado is a lot like getting to know your way around the downtown area of a big city. Until you have been through it several times it is pretty confusing.

Alternatives and Recommendations:

As an intermediate step, it is recommended that the District take a fresh look at the arrangement of trails and signs, attempt to eliminate a trail segment or two, clearcut the forest of signs, and replace them with fewer and better.

The District should also pursue a goal of providing a permanent solution to the problem of overlapping activities. The solution appears to lie in separating the uses and finding alternate locations for trailheads and access roads. The land presently under permit to Holy Cross Abby appears to be a suitable location for a trailhead and also a suitable site for additional camping units. Other land suitable for these purposes may exist on the opposite (northeast) side of the permitted lands.

Some or all of the Abbotts Lodge lands have been under permit since 1941. The facilities on the lands do not appear to be in top condition or fully utilized. These circumstances seem to indicate that the Lodge is not contributing to functions of the Abby and that the Abby may be willing to relinquish the permit. It is our understanding that this possibility has been informally explored by the District Ranger, however, a definitive reply was not obtained. We would encourage him to explore it further.

It is our general conclusion that opportunities exist for Alvarado to make greater contributions to supplying outdoor recreation opportunities for the public. Moreover, it seems very timely to plan a course of action that will eventually make this possible as opposed to doing nothing or unwittingly allowing conflicting uses to be prolonged or become more entrenched. Admittedly this report is based on impressions and a course of action should not be pursued aggressively without benefit of further analysis of site capability, demand and priority in comparison to other alternatives.

Capability: It is recommended that the Forest Landscape Architect examine the physical and environmental characteristics of the site and adjacent areas and report to the Ranger on expansion opportunities.

Demand: Recreation demand can be forecasted on the basis of peoples expressed wants and the projected population. Wants can be expressed through use. Based on observation and use data, the campground appears to be occupied at or near capacity during the summer period June through August. The population within Alvarado Campgrounds' area of marketing opportunity and the projected population trends are displayed below.

Market	Travel time Zone	Actual miles Distance	Urban Areas	Estimated 1980 Population	Estimated Percent of total use from Urban Area
Principal	1 hour	50	Canon City	15,500	10
	"	60	Pueblo	122,200	40
Secondary	2 hours	80	Colo. Springs	179,200	25
Distant	3 hours	150	Denver	1,150,000	15
	1 day	-	West Tex. Oka. Ka.	-	10

Population increase in Colorado 1970-1980 = 25.5%

Predicted population increase in Colorado 1980-1990 = 26.4%

The above factors indicate that demand exists for camping opportunities in the Wet Mountain Valley and that demand will increase. It is unlikely that predicted fuel shortages will significantly diminish rate of demand. The Valley's inherent attractiveness and range of recreation opportunities will continue to be sought after even though means and frequency of travel may change. For the population concerned, there are no substitute areas to the east and there are few comparable areas to the west. More people can be expected to visit and stay longer. More people within the primary market area can be expected to stay overnight. More bedroom space will be needed somewhere in the valley.

Alternatives: Time did not permit a review of opportunities for establishing new campgrounds on other National Forest lands within the Wet Mountain Valley. This dispersed camping and trailhead area at the lower end of the Music Pass road appears to have considerable potential for becoming a developed campground insofar as physical attributes are concerned.

It is suspected that opportunities exist for the development of private campgrounds in the Westcliffe area. Several have been established south-east of Salida along route 50 and the Arkansas River. A large destination type campground at Hayden Creek appears to be receiving good business. The District and the Forest might be able to encourage private enterprise to develop privately operated campgrounds on private land. However, because of the close relationship between developed sites and dispersed

recreation, it does not seem appropriate to encourage private development, or to establish new campgrounds on National Forest lands, unless steps are also taken to accommodate the increased OHV, mountaineering, fishing and other dispersed activity uses that will surely result from establishing more campgrounds.

Two other factors that should be examined in the consideration of alternate sites are the inherent advantages of Alvarado and the effects that development at alternate sites might have on other recreation activity and experience opportunities in those areas. Among the advantages of expanding at Alvarado are its exceptionally good road access, convenient distance from Westcliffe, proximity to trails, and the efficiency that can be gained by administering one large area instead of separate smaller areas.

Item 5. Lake Creek Campground suffers from something similar to urban blight. A decision needs to be made concerning its future.

Condition. The layout of the campground consists of a single string of eleven closely spaced campsites located along Lake Creek. The parking spurs are short and many vehicles are parked at the roadside. The road is badly eroded and dusty from lack of any type of surfacing. Barriers, fire grates and sites in general tend to be rundown. The campground does not have a water-system. The campground is enveloped with thick oakbrush. In spite of conditions, it receives considerable use.

Cause: The deterioration of the campground has been occurring over a long period of time. It has probably been neglected because of its remoteness from District workcenters and its small size.

Effect: The site does not reflect the standards of design, upkeep and attractiveness that we and the public normally associate with a Forest Service Campground. The situation has not gone unrecognized by the District. RIM data lists the needs for rehabilitating the site to an acceptable condition of maintenance. However, restoring the site to its original condition and people at one time capacity is a questionable pursuit in view of its design, small size and isolation. In the interest of making prudent investments and promoting future operating efficiency, alternatives other than rehabilitation should be considered.

Alternatives and Recommendations:

Regional Policy (R2 FSM 2330.3) states that a site evaluation is required before any major rehabilitation is undertaken. Among the alternatives that this type of evaluation should consider are:

1. Retain site with upgrading of facilities to better serve users (rehabilitation).

2. Change site to make it more compatible with current use patterns, design standards and user demands. (reconstruction)
3. Eliminate site and restore land to original condition.

Generally speaking, there appears to be an interdependent relationship between dispersed use and developed site use. A campground located in an area devoid of dispersed recreation opportunities will receive relatively little use. Correspondingly, a prime dispersed recreation area devoid of campgrounds (bedrooms) will not be utilized as much as if campgrounds were present.

We believe there is sufficient evidence to suggest that there is demand for a campground on Lake Creek. As measures of demand we site present use and the range of dispersed recreation opportunities within the surrounding area. It is also our opinion the the presence of a campground at Lake Creek is consistent with the recreation opportunities spectrum classes that currently exist in the area and that will continue to exist in the area for time indefinite. Accordingly, the preferred alternative appears to be number 2. However, a more detailed analysis should be made before a commitment to this course of action is made. We therefore recommend that the District with the assistance of the Forest Landscape Architect prepare a narrative design report according to the format described in R2 FSM 2331.1(.). The design report should be expanded to include a user characteristics analysis and a demand analysis. Examples of both are shown in Appendix D.

APPENDIX

- Section A. Announcement of Review and Objectives
- Section B. PACT IT IN - PACK IT OUT Direction.
- Section C. Recreation Opportunity Guide Sample
- Section D. User Characteristics and Demand Analysis Example.
- Section E. Photographs.
- SECTION F. Map.

S.O.

REPLY TO: 1410 Management Reviews

AUG 01 1979

SUBJECT: Proposed Recreation Program Review

TO: District Ranger, San Carlos



I have decided that a review should be made of recreation program administration involving the Sangre De Cristo Range portion of the San Carlos District. Several factors indicate that recreation visitor use is exceeding an adequate level of management. Some of these factors include:

1. external reports of trail use conflicts between ORV's and hikers,
2. internal reports of observed public confusion over travel regulations,
3. concentrations of people and vehicles at places without benefit of improvements or facilities,
4. heavy vehicle traffic on low-standard roads, and
5. reported run-down appearance of Lake Creek Campground.

In addition to the need to review conditions in the context of current problems, the review should also provide timely information for use in developing the land management plan and for taking appropriate actions to maintain the characteristics of the Sangre De Cristo proposed wilderness.

A proposed review plan is enclosed. Your involvement in the preparation of the review plan is a required part of the process. Please respond to proposed plan by August 7, 1979.

Marvin Vander Kolk

107 R. N. RIDINGS
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure

PROPOSED MANAGEMENT REVIEW PLAN

Reviewing Level: Forest Supervisor, Pike & San Isabel National Forests.

Level Reviewed: District Ranger, San Carlos Ranger District.

Type of Review: Recreation Program Review, limited to the Sangre De Cristo Range portion of the San Carlos District.

Objectives of the Review and Chief Areas of Concern:

1. Determine if off road vehicle (ORV) use is being adequately administered. Specific areas to be reviewed include the following:
 - a. Is the public being effectively placed on notice concerning travel restrictions?
 - b. Is the public complying with the restrictions and are they being enforced?
 - c. Do situations exist where approved ORV travel and other uses are occurring in conflict?
 - d. Is ORV use causing significant damage to soil, water quality, vegetation, wildlife or aesthetics?
 - e. Is National Forest ORV use causing problems for adjacent private landowners?
 - f. Is ORV use being systematically monitored for the purpose of assessing use and impact.
2. Determine if public use at undeveloped camping areas, parking areas, lakes and riparian areas is resulting in any significant resource deterioration or unsanitary conditions.
3. Determine if the low-standard system roads (which are the principal means of access into the Sangre De Cristo Range), are being maintained commensurate with use.
4. Determine if developed recreation sites and facilities and improvements such as system trails are being maintained at acceptable levels, and if any developed sites are in need of major rehabilitation.
5. Determine if any present recreational uses are diminishing the characteristics of the proposed Sangre De Cristo Wilderness.
6. Determine if the administrative needs of the area are appropriately addressed by the District's RIM data, annual work plans, and Program Budget Documents.

Proposed approach to conducting the review:

It is proposed that the review team spend a maximum of three days examining conditions in the field with the District Ranger and principal recreation assistant and that approximately one half day be spent reviewing data at the District Office and discussing the draft report.

Prior to visiting the District, team members will (as a minimum) review

FSM 1410 Management Review;

FSM 2310, 2320, 2340 and 2350;

FSM 7730;

Existing LMP Direction and Coordinating Requirements;

Existing Travel Management Plan;

Proposed Sangre De Cristo Wilderness boundaries and background information;

Recent levels of District financing for recreation, trails and roads; and

Proposed Regional Dispersed Recreation Management Tasks and Standards.

It is proposed that the Review team consist of the following:

Marvin Vander Kolk, Principal Staff, Recreation

Joe Beck, Forest Engineer

Rod Lewis, Recreation Staff

Larry Gash, Forester, South Platte District

Cindy Rivera, Outdoor Recreation Planner

It is proposed that the team overnight at Canon City or Westcliff. The team will debrief each evening and work on the draft report.

Proposed Dates for Conducting Review:

August 21, 22, 23, and A.M. August 24, 1979

Proposed Travel Itinerary:

Tuesday August 21

0800 Meet District Ranger at Canon City. Visit Lake Creek Campground, Balman Reservoir, and access to Rainbow Trail.

1300 Travel Hermit Lake Road. Visit areas of concentrated use and access to Rainbow Trail. Visit Conquistador Ski area.

Wednesday August 22

A.M. Visit Alvarado Campground and portions of Comanche-Venable Trail route, and Horn Road access.

P.M. Travel road to South Colony Lakes. Visit areas of concentrated use. Travel road to Music Pass, visit trailheads.

Thursday August 23

Travel to Medano Pass, Mosca Pass and headwaters of the Huerfano River.

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Master Copy

cc: all dist
January 24, 1979
Red Lewis

FOREST SERVICE MANUAL

INTERIM DIRECTIVE NO. 14

DURATION: One year from issuance date unless previously terminated or reissued.

CHAPTER: 2330 Development Sites in Public Sector

POSTING NOTICE: Last ID was No. 13 in FSM 2350

This provides direction on the "PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT" solid waste collection concept.

2331.12b - "PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT" Solid Waste Collection Concept.

1. General. Many dispersed areas and developed sites in the National Forest System receive comparatively light recreational use. However, it is important that solid waste generated within these areas be handled properly. Collection of this waste is very expensive, frequently requiring Forest personnel to drive or walk long distances to collect garbage in these areas. A management technique called PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT has evolved as a method of getting Forest users to help reduce the cost of solid waste disposal by taking care of their own trash.

The concept of PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT relies on the Forest visitor to pack his or her own solid waste to a central storage or disposal point or to his or her home, and thus save personnel time and taxpayer dollars.

2. Application. The PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT concept is adaptable to a wide variety of situations and is applicable to both developed sites and dispersed areas. The system generally works especially well at lightly used remote developed sites and dispersed areas. Wilderness jump-off points and other similar locations are often ideal places to institute the concept.

3. Implementation. The PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT concept is only one solid waste management tool and should not be considered a cure-all for solid waste problem areas. Implementation of a PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT concept does not mean that on-site management of the area should be abandoned. On-site visits may be reduced, but a certain amount of public contact and clean-up is still required.

Communications of the PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT concept should be supplemented with a broad-based public education program utilizing communication media to help the Forest users learn how the concept works and why it was implemented. Communication must be clear and concise and establish a commitment in each recreationist to leave his or her camp as clean or cleaner than when he or she arrived.

Furnishing plastic litter bags to Forest users to store and transport their garbage to a disposal point has proved to be effective and is recommended. Bags must be routinely furnished once the public becomes accustomed to this service. If the supply runs out, some recreationists will dispose of their garbage at unsuitable locations.

In most instances, a disposal point should be provided. Many users do not feel obligated to search out the local landfill or to haul their garbage home with them; especially if home is a considerable distance away. In most cases, ultimate disposal points should be Government-furnished containers placed at strategic locations. However, some low-volume systems may rely on local recreationists to carry their waste home with them.


The PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT concept should stress the need for careful planning and thought prior to implementation. Before deciding in favor of using the system, the following should be considered for every site and watershed under consideration:

Type of User	Type of Recreation
Duration of Visit	Period of Use
Recreation Season	Amount of Repeat Use
Public Attitude	Access Routes
Types of Waste Generated	Volume of Waste Generated
Container or Disposal Point(s)	Sign Location(s)

Once the decision is made to utilize the concept, it must have the full support of management at all levels.

After implementation of the system, a follow-up effort to check success is required. A check of the system should include determination of littering, use of bags, and discussions with the recreation public using the system. Annual review of success and problems will allow adjustment of the system to meet local needs.

4. Signs and Dispenser. Recommended signs and posters are discussed in chapter 50, section 53 of Sign Handbook. Posters may be ordered from Central Supply Branch.



F. LEROY BOND
Associate Deputy Chief

Hiking

SECTION C

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service
Lolo National Forest
Missoula Ranger District

PETTY MOUNTAIN AREA



TRAIL BEGINNING, 3200 ft. elev. (975 m.) Lower Blue Mountain Picnic Site. Trailhead is directly west of campfire ring.

TRAIL ENDING, 6460 ft. elev. (1970 m.) Blue Mountain Lookout.

ACCESS #1 Two miles southwest of Missoula on Highway 93, turn right on Blue Mountain Road #365. Follow road 1.5 miles to junction. Take left fork and drive past cattleguard to main picnic site at the Lower Blue Mountain Recreation Area.

ACCESS #2 South Avenue west to Maclay Bridge. Take County Road #30 southeast along the Bitter Root River until reaching the first road junction. Turn right and drive past cattleguard on Blue Mountain Road #365 to picnic site.

ATTRACTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS The easiest section of trail is the lower 2.5 miles. The climb becomes more difficult after reaching the first road crossing because the grade is steeper and the tread is rutted in some areas. Once on the ridgetop, climbing becomes less difficult. An easier route is to drive Road #365 to Blue Mountain Lookout and follow the trail downhill to the picnic site. This trail currently is used most by horseback riders. Water is not available enroute. There is ample parking at the trailhead.

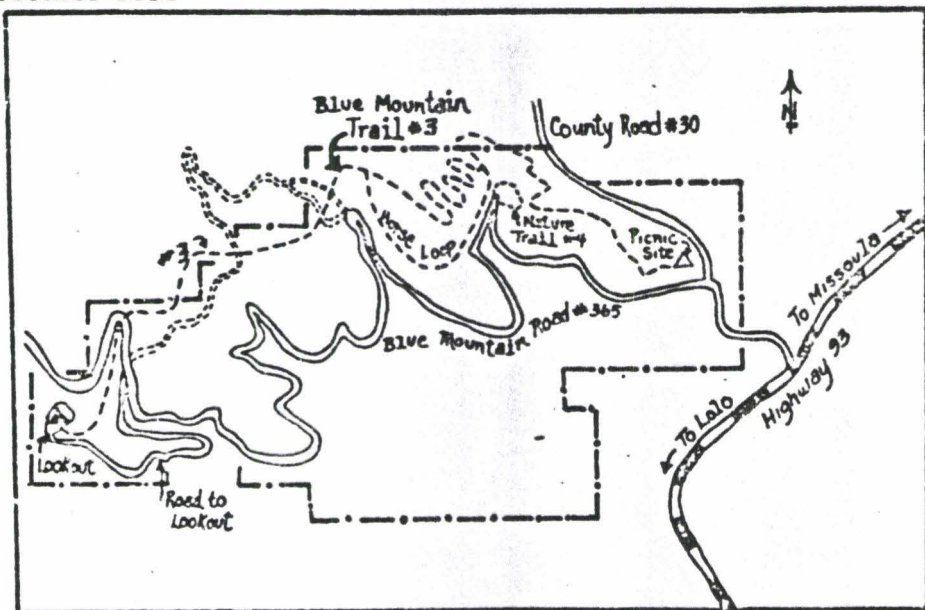
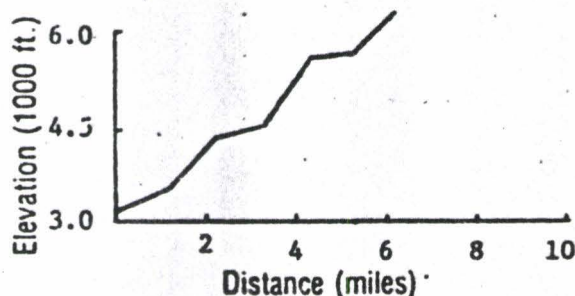
BLUE MOUNTAIN TRAIL #3

Length: 6.0 mi. (9.6 km.)

Recommended season:

Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
←			→

Use: Light to Medium
Difficulty: Easy to Moderate
USGS Map(s): BLUE MOUNTAIN and SOUTHWEST MISSOULA Quads.



Section D.

Outline for Recreation User Characteristics Analysis For Application to a Site or an Area

1. Describe activity(ies),
 - what is happening?
 - when is it happening?
 - where is it happening?
 - how much or to what extent?
2. Describe participants,
 - who is involved (sexes, ages, locals, in state residents, out of state residents)?
 - number involved?
 - time spent recreating?
3. Describe participant preferences,
 - physical settings.
 - social settings.
 - management settings.
4. Explain why activity is occurring (summarize).
5. Explain behavior changes or trends (such as changes caused by new equipment, high costs, crowding, condition of facilities).

Factors to Consider in Forecasting Recreation Demand

Definition: Recreation demand is the amount of participation that would occur in a recreation activity if the necessary opportunities were available sufficiently near to the population source.

Demand arises from a population source and can be assumed to parallel population growth or decline.

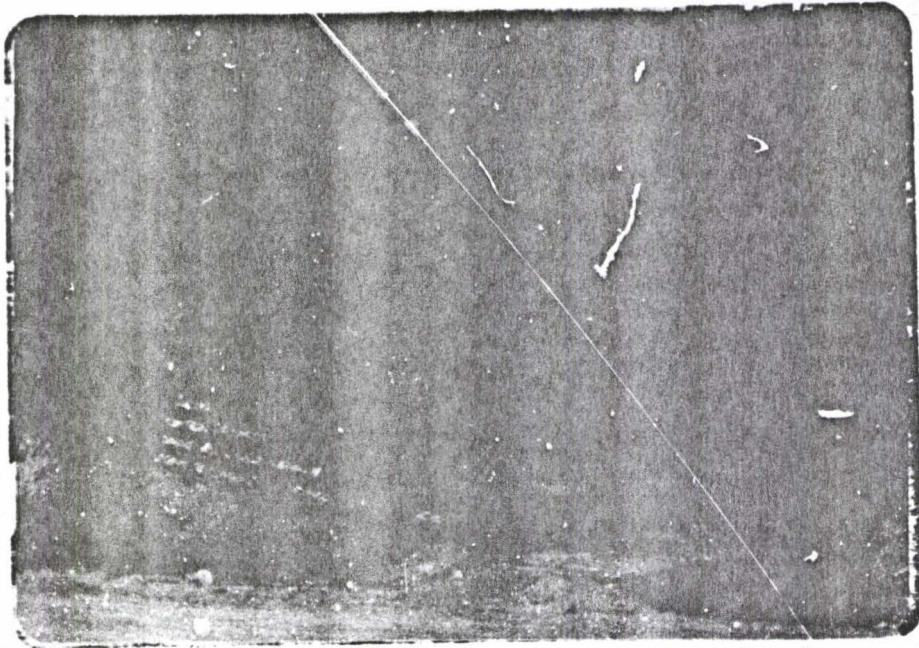
Demand is influenced by the distance from supply to population source and the willingness or ability of people to travel in order to participate in the activity.

Demand is dependant on the degree to which people within the population source participate in the activity. People from urban areas tend to participate at different and usually higher levels than rural counterparts. Annual participation levels are influenced by levels of education, income, and occupation. Participation levels follow trends.

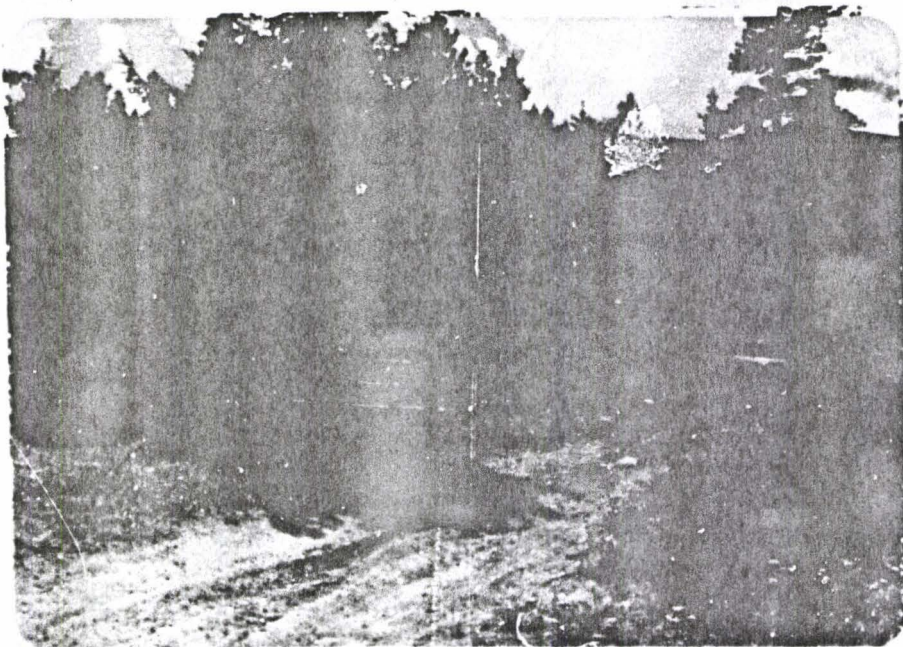
Demand must be allocated to supply of sites or opportunities within the "market area" according to travel time and participation levels. "Market area" is considered to be the region in which at least 80% of the users reside.

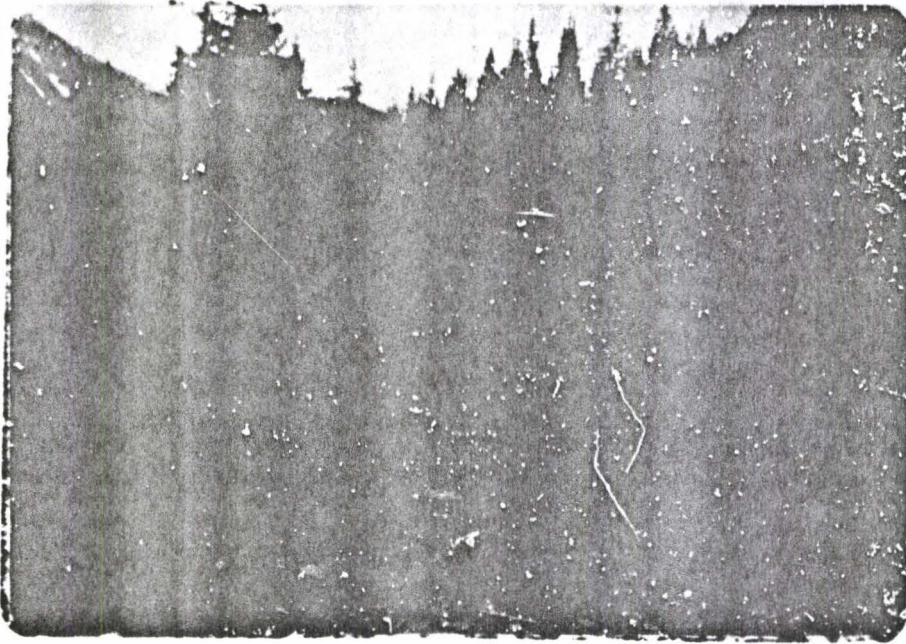
Demand for certain activities such as camping or picnicing is related to the demand for other activities that require a place to eat or sleep.

SECTION E

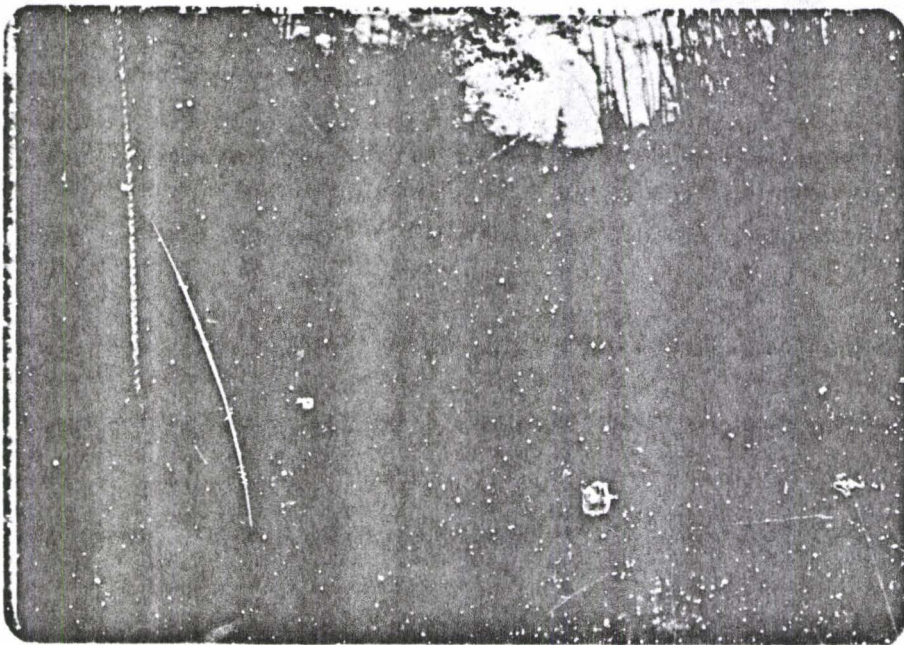


The District has, through the YACC Program made attractive and beneficial improvements at several campgrounds and trailheads (Page 3).

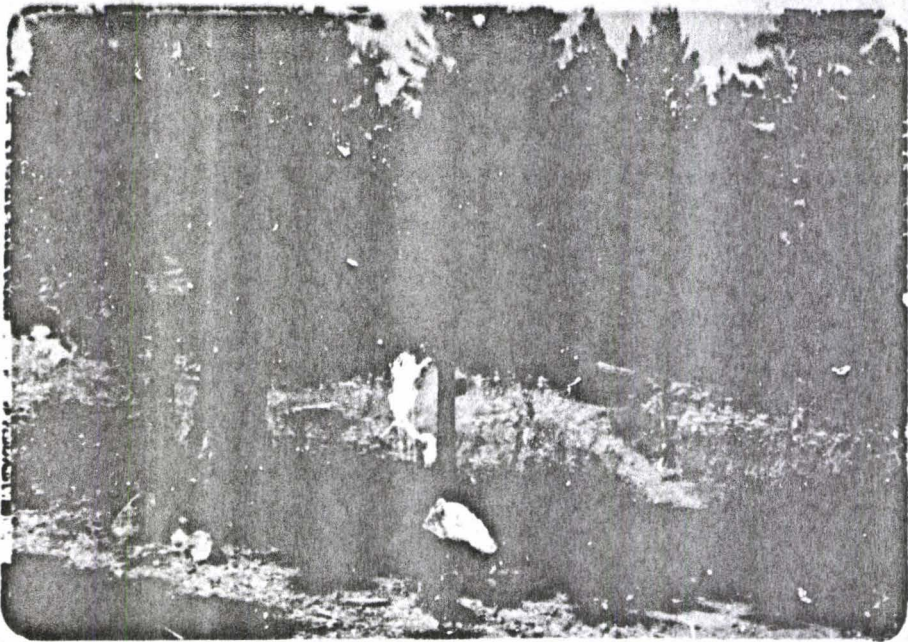




Roads that have not received maintenance for years and perhaps decades.



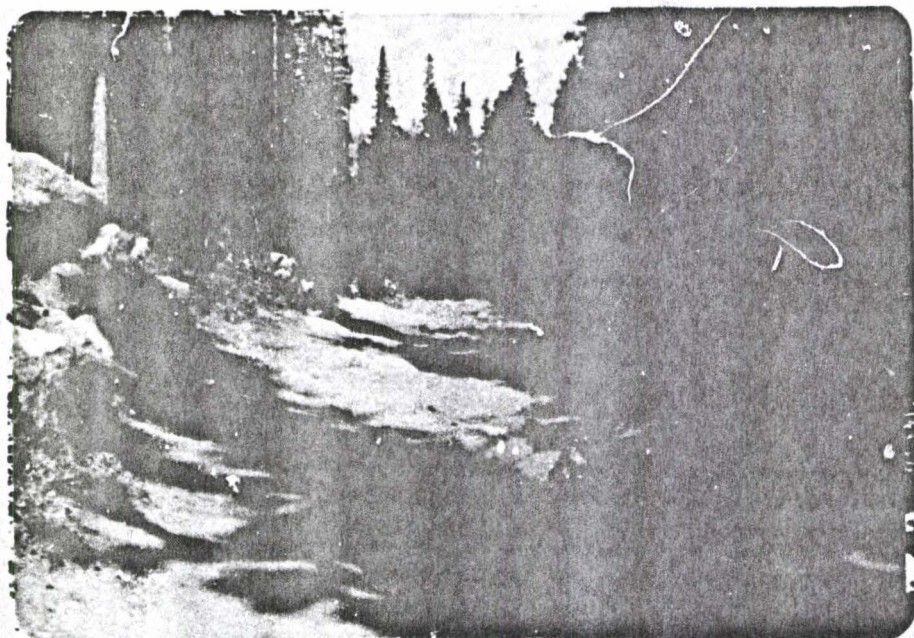
are being improved through cooperation with Custer County (Page 4). (Hermit Road FR#301.)



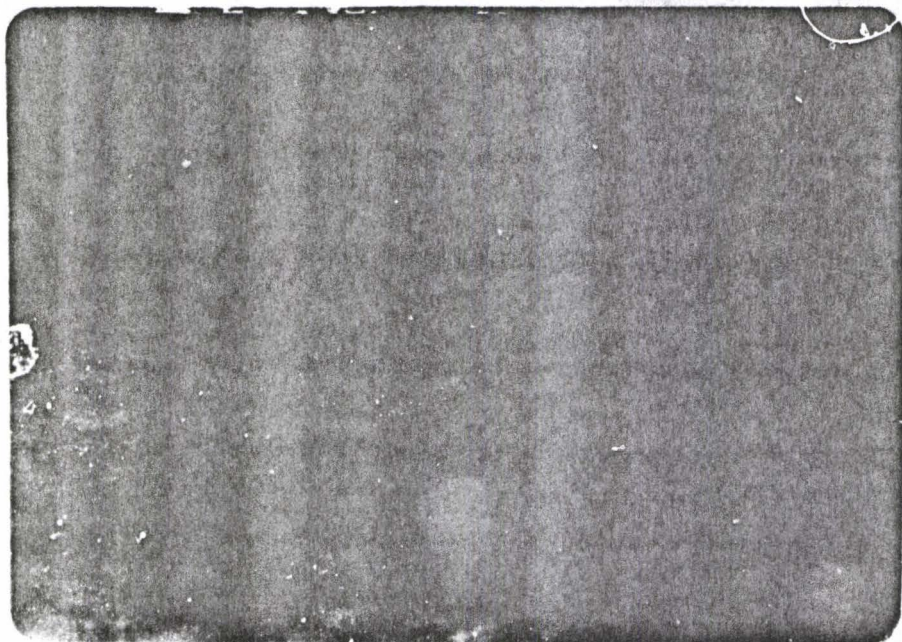
Off-road vehicle restrictions are being effectively posted (Page 4).

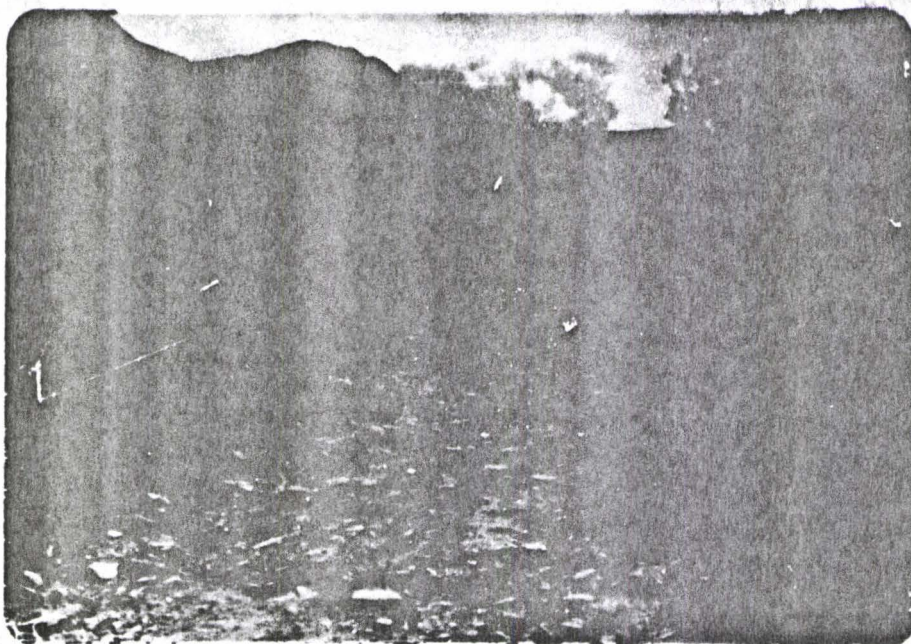


The San Carlos District has developed its own standard for posting closure notices (Page 5).

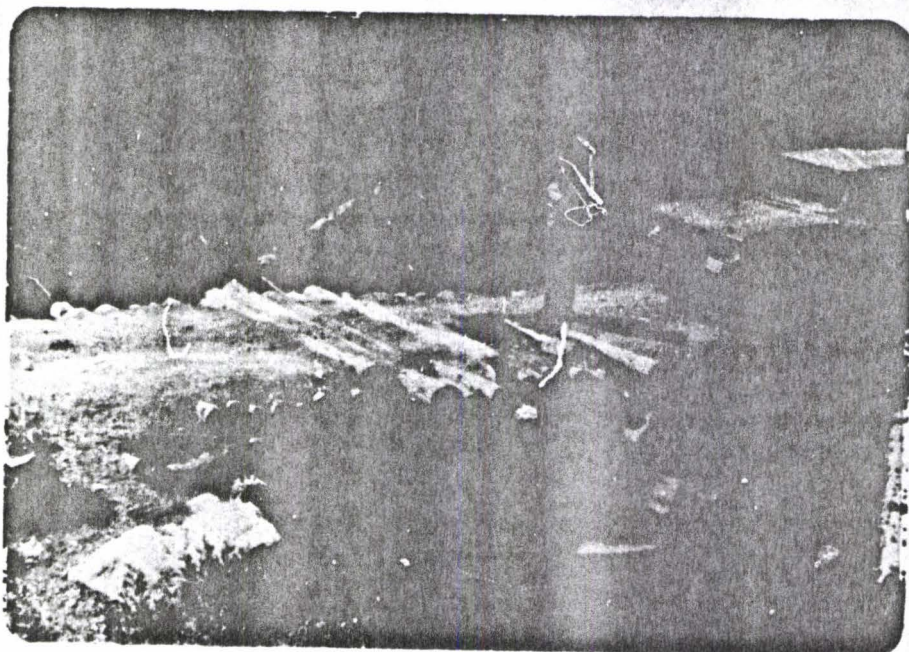


Forest Development Roads providing access to the Sangres are, with few exceptions, severely eroded and some portions are hazardous to travel (Page 8). (FR#313 to South Colony lakes.)

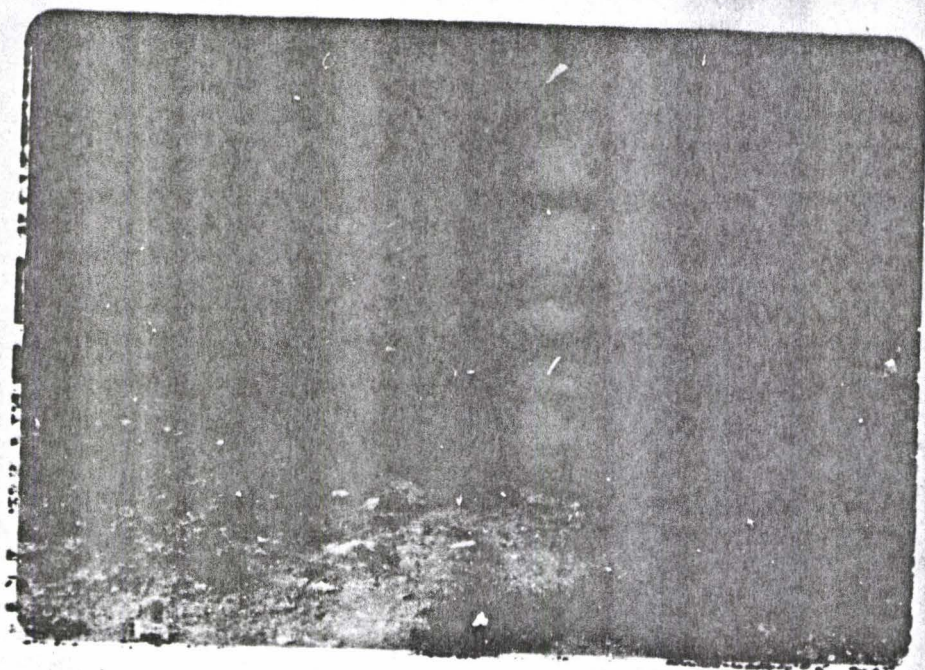




- Principal access roads are eroded to a condition resembling a rock and boulderstrewn dry stream bed (Page 8). (FR#301)



- A decadent log bridge across South Colony Creek in Section 16 is being used by some vehicles - others ford the creek (Page 8).



Soil erosion is occurring at some dispersed campsites and trailheads because of improperly located access routes and unsuitable parking sites. The problems at most of these locations could be remedied without much expense by relocating spurs and placing rock barriers at critical points (Page 2).

